

Long-Term Solutions

Long-Term Items Supported by the Steering Committee Policy and Design Solutions

34. Update the Commercial District Redevelopment Plan's Architectural Design Guidelines

Update the Commercial District Redevelopment Plan's architectural design guidelines to mandate ground floor active commercial, retail, or restaurant use on all parcels in the business district. Detail the required size and character of large retailing windows on the first floor. Mandate at least a two-story structure to infill all parcels fronting Grand. Mandate second floors to be used for parking, offices, or residential. Guidelines can be created to encourage taller buildings to create higher densities that can help pay for the structured parking garages. Without the higher density, and resulting higher property values, structured parking solutions will be less economically feasible, and would therefore have to be subsidized by the City if they were ever to be implemented. The result of lower density commercial development (typical suburban sprawl) will be a higher demand for surface parking lots in the area, thus placing more development pressure for acquisition of residential property to demolish for surface parking lots. Higher density can include residential uses, including both apartments and condos in either townhouse or loft building form. Visit the University City loop to note the many 4, 5, and 6 story apartments and office buildings, and how the mix of use and the higher density of development play a part of this district's success. Both higher density elderly housing and student housing are a component of the U City Loop.

The Steering Committee offered no additional comments.

35. Entry Monument Gates Required to Define Edge of District

Where larger scaled projects are implemented, and extend at least three properties into the existing residential used properties, the development should be required to build Business District Entry Monuments. A standard Entry Monument design should be created and held on file for reuse by any Large Scale project developer (See Design of Right-of-Way Improvements in Solution #19). Additionally, all large scaled projects must provide fenced front yards per the landscape and fence standards noted above. Large scaled projects, where demolition is permitted, must build any new building façades to align with the front facades of the existing homes on the block. Interesting architectural features such as towers, turrets, bay windows, and front porches are allowed to project beyond the front façade plane created by the existing homes. Large projects that create public parking must install standard public parking signage and lighting.

The Steering Committee offered no additional comments.

36. Remove Non-Compatible Uses in the Business District

Support per the Redevelopment Plan for the eventual removal of the Amoco and Phillips Food Mart as inappropriate business uses in this commercial district. Such auto-oriented businesses are considered to be legal, continuing non-conforming uses in the "H" Area Commercial District. Redevelopment of the corner sites for higher density commercial or mixed-use development is desirable. Parking for such developments may not only serve employees, customers and residents on site, but may also solve part of the district's overall parking need.

The Steering Committee offered the following comments:

The Steering Committee would like to keep the Amoco Station because the building is historic and because they provide vehicle services (inspection, repair, etc.). They agree that the Phillips Food Mart space could be made better use of in the future, but do not want to put them out of business. If they close, we should pursue the site for parking or redevelopment more in sync with the District.

A word of caution: At the intersection of Kingshighway, Vandeventer and Shenandoah in the Southwest Garden neighborhood there is a vacant lot. This used to be a gas station. It was acquired by eminent domain for redevelopment and remediated. It still sits vacant and for sale because it is so expensive that no one is willing to purchase it for redevelopment. We don't want this to happen on South Grand!

The parking solution drawings show the implementation of this over the long-term redevelopment of the district. The existing property/business owner will determine the exact timing of the change, with no eminent domain used to force the redevelopment.

37. The Commerce Bank Site

The Commerce Bank site currently has the ability to become the largest redevelopment project in the South Grand Business District. The land assembly is complete; the demolition of the existing building is already anticipated and desired by neighborhood residents. The existing buildings are poorly designed in that they tend to discourage commercial activity due to the limited storefront windows on the street front facades. Commerce Bank is well along with the planning for a smaller branch bank building at the corner of Grand Avenue and Hartford Street.

The remainder of the site has potential to stimulate further activity for the South Grand Business District by becoming a Traditional Town Center. This project should be mixed use in character, including ground floor restaurant or retail fronting Grand. Parking on a second and third floor, and either office and or residential on the upper floors. The Hutchinson Arms apartments further north on Grand shows just how ambitious developers thought many years ago. A single large project could take the South Grand Business District to the next level of success. Higher densities were favored in both the resident and business owner's surveys. The branch bank building and adjacent mixed-use building could be built to align with other buildings on Grand Avenue and parking, therein leaving the remaining eastern half of the block for attached (higher density) for sale townhouses. The parking for this large building should be sized to accommodate some pay, hourly public parking in addition to parking for employees and customers of the bank and the proposed mixed-use building.

The Steering Committee stated:

Steering Committee's suggestion concerning the Commerce site and the remaining block (from 10.14.02 meeting minutes:

There was a long discussion on the Commerce parking lot and how it could become a parking resource for a portion of the commercial district. A majority of the Committee favored clearing the three residences at Juniata and Arkansas (the southeastern end of the Commerce parking lot) for parking or commercial uses. A committee member from Tower Grove East made it clear that residents of the adjacent blocks want the three buildings rehabbed and support constructing new residential units at the east end of the block.

The Steering Committee thought that in general the Draft List provided by the Consulting Team advocates new parking facilities behind the South Grand businesses towards the residential area rather than using and upgrading existing parking lots, including the Commerce lot.

The Steering Committee decided to make several strong recommendations to the Consulting Team. They would like to see the following clearly included in the final Parking Study:

- a) Utilize as much as possible of the existing Commerce Site for enhanced parking.*
- b) It will take a large community effort to improve parking using various solutions.*
- c) Improve (pave, line, fence, meter, landscape, etc.) existing city lots.*

- d) *Approach the First Divine Church of Science (on Wyoming) to reach an agreement about shared parking for this lot.*
- e) *The idea of paving backyards for parking should only be used if the residential buildings are converted to commercial uses.*
- f) *Instead of creating a Transitional Zoning District process, stick with the City's existing conditional use process. The Transitional Zoning District process is viewed as a slippery slope that can lead to parking garages fronting on side streets, an unpopular solution. The conditional use process works! And it allows the property to revert back to original zoning when the property changes ownership or use.*

The construction of the new Commerce Bank facility is now underway. Selective demolition work has begun, and the interior retrofit of the existing building on the south half of the lot is complete for the temporary facilities for the bank to use during the demolition and construction process for the new building that will extend to the end of 2003. Due to these factors, the large-scale mixed-use development with a parking garage originally proposed as solution #37 (as noted above) for this site is not included as part of the final solutions for the parking study.

An approximate drawing of the new Commerce Bank site plan is shown in the parking solution drawings. A large portion of the eastern half of the block is not needed for the new bank facility. The limited size of the remaining south half of the block restricts the amount of mixed-use retail development that can front Grand on this site. The parking solution drawings show a new building with a footprint of about 5,350 sf. per floor and 155-car parking lot on this block. Commerce requires about 30 parking spaces, with the new mixed-use building (3 stories) requiring 65 parking spaces. This leaves a surplus of about 115 parking spaces in this City Block. The parking solution drawings show the outer edges of parking on this large lot to be used for public, metered parking spaces, with the center of the lot for use by the buildings on the block. Note also that the parallel street parking spaces that line this parking lot are also shown as metered.

Parking Required in City Block 1463:

Commerce Parking	30 parking spaces at 3.33 spaces per 1,000 sf.
New Building 5,350 sf. Retail	30 parking spaces at 5.5 spaces per 1,000 sf.
2 nd & 3 rd Floor 10,700 sf. Office	35 parking spaces at 3.33 spaces per 1,000 sf.
Subtotal On Site 95 parking spaces (per suburban standards used by Commerce)	

Parking supply shown in drawings:

On Site Parking Supplied	155 parking spaces
Street Parking	55 parking spaces
Total parking in immediate blocks 210 (115 car surplus for public parking in this block)	

Redevelopment of Eastern End of City Block 1463

Some of the public comment concerning this parking lot had a clear geographic division. Many residents living west of Grand believed that the Commerce Bank parking lot is the best solution for all of the parking problems in the Business District. Some of these residents also were proponents of the demolition of the existing three homes located on the southeast corner of this City Block. In contrast, many of the residents living east of Grand tended to want to preserve these three homes, and felt that it was reasonable to build new homes on the eastern portion of the existing parking lot.

The parking solution drawings show the reuse of the eastern end of City Block 1463 for the construction of 10 or 11 new infill homes (total count will be determined by actual use of the remaining Commerce Lot as parking, see optional site development drawings on page 34.1, 34.2, & 34.3; where each solution shows a surplus of parking for long term redevelopment of the block) and the renovation of the existing vacant homes

on this block. City Properties has already tested the marketability of the parking surplus available on this block and found that there was not much demand for parking so far away from the business district. New development fronting Grand could increase the usefulness of the parking lot, but the above parking calculations show that a significant surplus can be created even with the use of the eastern end of the block for the construction of new homes. The new homes should all be for sale homes that include at least 2 or 3 parking spaces on the back of each lot accessed off of the alley. There should be an evaluation of the usefulness of 100% of the existing Commerce Bank lot remaining as parking, or if conversion of some of this area is better used to rebuild the residential character of these blocks. See short-term solution #12 for further description.



View of the existing Commerce Bank building viewed from the roof of the Dickman Building. A smaller branch bank could make the remote parking lot behind Commerce more inviting, but the new drive-thru teller lanes will present a traffic barrier to the use of any parking surplus here. Note also the large gap in the streetscape between Commerce and Jay's International – see solution #38 below.

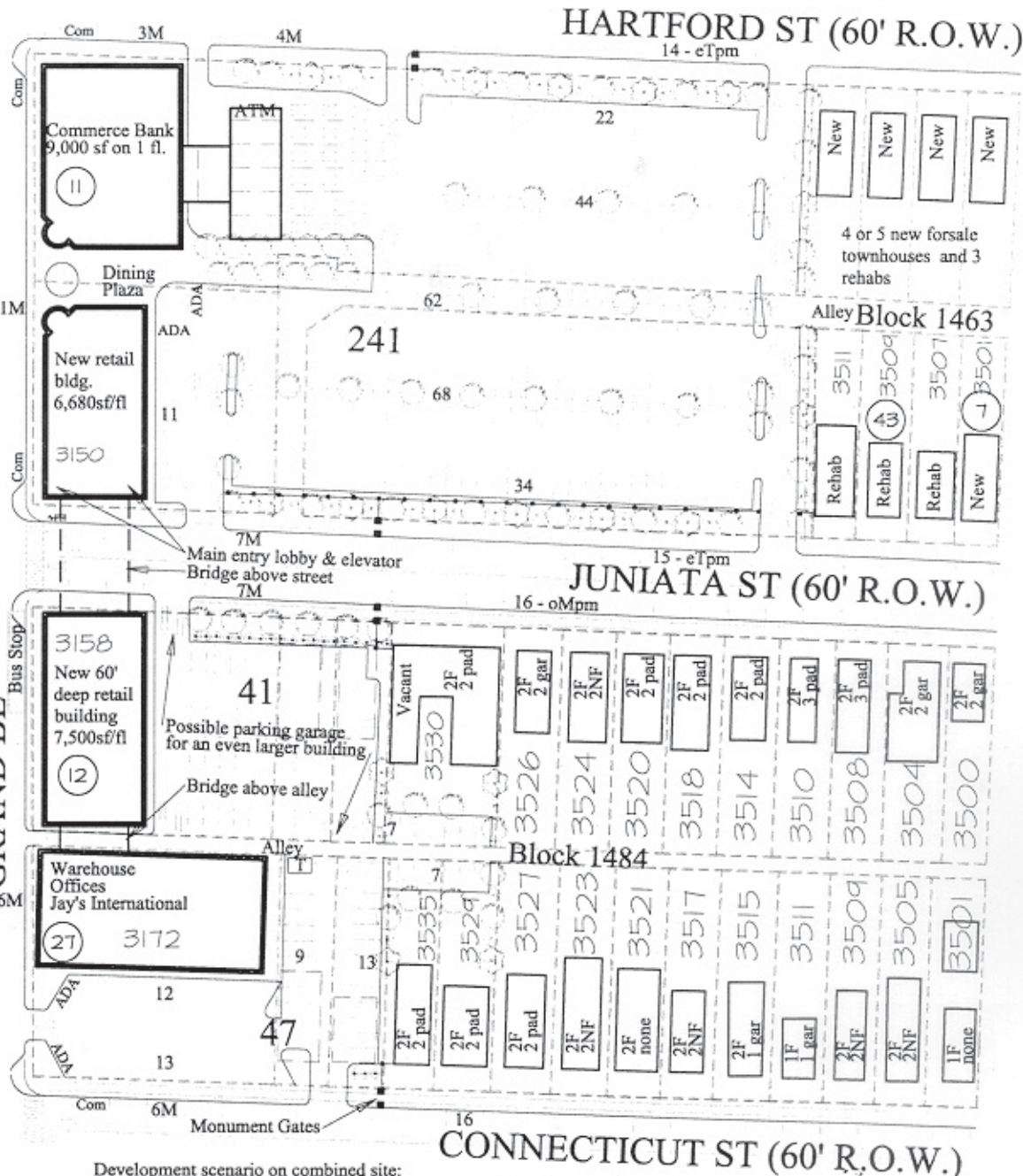
38. Redevelopment Potential at the SW Corner of Juniata and Grand

The City Property Company currently owns the existing 29-car parking lot located just to the north of Jay's International. The existing parking lot is critical to the continued successful operation of Jay's International store. The parking solution drawings show how this site can be easily redesigned to hold almost double the parking spaces. One design element that helps achieve this increase is the use of the existing alley as a drive aisle, with parking spaces positioned directly along the southern edge of the lot. Using existing alleys as

A larger infill project could be created in City Blocks 1463 & 1484. This drawing shows a 3 story, 6,680 sf. building built adjacent to Commerce Bank and a 7,500 sf. building built on the next block to the south. These buildings could be linked by a bridge on the 2nd & 3rd floors that spans above Juniata. These buildings could be further linked to the upper floor of Jays International for redevelopment of this existing warehouse space. Key to linking these buildings is that they then could locate the main stair & elevator entry tower toward the existing large parking lot on City Block 1463.

This redevelopment project will fill the large gap in the retail streetscape, and could encourage more pedestrian activity to better utilize the large parking lot currently owned by Commerce. The parking statistics shown on page 33 & 36 show how this redevelopment concept can work. An even larger building would be possible if structured parking were built in place of the 41 car surface lot shown on City Block 1484.

The bridge above Juniata could contain very interesting office or loft space that would add an architecturally unique feature to the character of the South Grand Business District. It is unique features such as this that distinguish urban shopping districts from the more bland suburban competition.



Development scenario on combined site:

Block 1463
Commerce Bank = 9,000 gross sf. (30 spaces req.)
New 6,680 sf. building,
3 stories plus bridge, 25,380 sf. (60 spaces req.)
Parking Spaces = 241
Street Parking = 45 (Juniata)
Parking Surplus = 196 (includes street parking)

Block 1484

Jays International = 9,000 gross sf. retail (27 spaces req.)
Jays International = 18,000 gross sf. office (36 spaces req.)
Jays International parking = 47
New 7,500 s.f. building, 3 stories, 22,500 s.f. (52 spaces req.)
City Property's parking = 41
Street Parking = 44
Expanded parking behind residents = 14
Parking Surplus = 31 (includes street parking)

Solution #37 Redevelopment of Commerce Bank Lot, Option #2

South Grand Commercial District Parking Study

including parts of the Tower Grove Heights & Tower Grove East Neighborhoods

City of St. Louis Planning & Urban Design Agency

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The findings of this project are based on data provided by the City of St. Louis Planning & Urban Design Agency and the City of St. Louis Planning & Urban Design Agency. The findings are not intended to be used for any other purpose without the written consent of the City of St. Louis Planning & Urban Design Agency.

Sheet 34.2
Date: March 20, 2003

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North



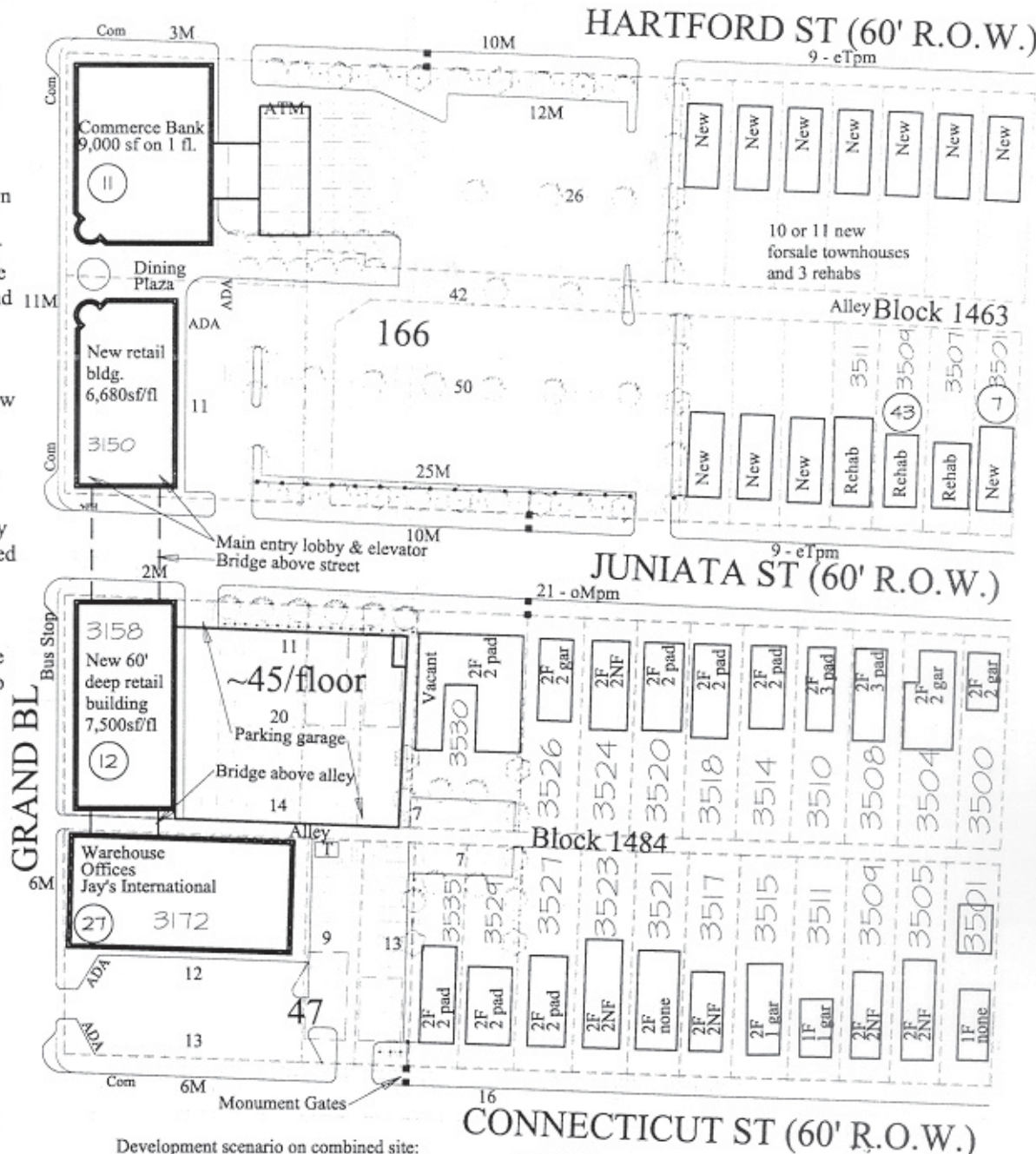
Scale: 1" = 100'-0"

This site design shows a maximization of the development potential for the currently vacant property on City Blocks 1463 and 1484. The design includes the construction of more homes on the eastern half of the old Commerce Bank lot, a four or five story building with bridge link on the Juniata corners, and a parking structure on block 1484.

This design is included to show how higher density developments could be built while still providing adequate parking. The higher density development will be necessary to support the cost of structured parking garages.

Four homes on Block 1484 (behind Jays International) are either demolished or moved to Block 1463.

The parking totals shown use the Town Center standards created for this study. This includes 2.9 spaces per 1,000 sf. for retail uses and 2 spaces per 1,000 s.f. for office space. Office space was the assumed use for the upper floors of the new buildings.



Development scenario on combined site:

Block 1463
Commerce Bank = 9,000 gross sf. (30 spaces req.)
New 6,680 sf. building,
4 stories plus bridge, 34,730 sf. (80 spaces req.)
Parking Spaces = 166
Street Parking = 45 (Juniata)
Parking Surplus = 101 (includes street parking)

Block 1484

Jays International = 9,000 gross sf. retail (27 spaces req.)
Jays International = 18,000 gross sf. office (36 spaces req.)
Jays International parking = 47
New 7,500 s.f. building, 4 stories, 30,000 s.f. (67 spaces req.)
City Property's parking = 45 spaces/floor x 3 floors = 135 spaces
Street Parking = 44
Expanded parking behind residents = 14
Parking Surplus = 110 (includes street parking)

Solution #38 Large Scale Mixed-Use Infill Potential, Option #3

South Grand Commercial District Parking Study

including parts of the Tower Grove Heights & Tower Grove East Neighborhoods

City of St. Louis Planning & Urban Design Agency

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The location of the proposed development is shown on the map of the City of St. Louis, Missouri, under the provisions of the Planning & Urban Design Agency, City of St. Louis, Missouri.

Sheet 34.3
Date: March 20, 2003

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North



Scale: 1" = 100'-0"

drive aisles for new parking spaces is a parking lot design pattern that should be implemented when ever possible in the district. This is a short-term solution that should be implemented immediately, but additional considerations should be made for the long-term redevelopment potential of this site. A description follows.

Long-Term Redevelopment Potential

The long-term parking solution drawings show this site with the potential for a new mixed-use retail building with 7,500 square feet per floor. For this site to be viable for retail development, at least two of the adjacent homes fronting Juniata will need to be demolished to create a 41-car parking lot (see drawing A6, City Block 1484). Parking for the Jay's International building can be expanded from the existing 18-car lot to a 47-car lot with the demolition of two homes fronting Connecticut. Note that Jay's International relies on the use of the existing parking lot to the north even though they do not own this parking lot.

This project site could be the center of a much larger redevelopment project that could make better use of the large parking lot behind Commerce Bank (City Block 1463). A large-scale redevelopment project here could include new infill buildings on City Blocks 1463 and 1484, and could attach to the upper floors of the Jay's International building, which are mostly used for warehouse storage at this time. Two separate development scenarios are shown for this site that detail larger projects that could better fill this gap in the streetscape and provide better use of the site for the long-term growth and success of the South Grand Business District.

Reasons for Planning For Growth

The parking study must consider the potential for growth by projecting possible redevelopment scenarios for the future. If the future growth of the district is not considered at this time, a similar parking crisis could be encountered in another 10 years if the district remains successful.

The current property ownership – The City Property Company – has shown great interest in investing in commercial redevelopment in the area. It is likely that this investment interest will continue into the future, especially since additional investment will increase the property values of all of the real estate holdings City Properties has in the Business District.

The large vacant parcel at 3158 Grand is positioned between two adjacent properties with great redevelopment potential. To the north, there will be a half block that will remain after Commerce Bank completes their new branch bank facility. The remaining Commerce site is currently viewed as the single largest source to supply public parking in the district. Much of this parking is too remotely located to be perceived by the general public as viable parking spaces. To the south of this site is the Jay's International Building that currently has about 12,500 square feet of warehouse space on the second and third floors. This space has good potential as either offices or residential lofts in the future.

In retailing, the synergy of locating multiple retail businesses in a row to create a shopping district is a proven development strategy. Town Centers and historic “Main Streets” display the origins of this retailing concept, with shopping malls and strip centers illustrating the dominant retail culture today. Missing tenant spaces in the streetscape weaken the retailing synergy. There is a large gap in the retail storefronts north of Jay's International, and it would be beneficial to the Business District to fill these large gaps with new mixed-use buildings. The increased activity along this street front will increase the usefulness of the large surface parking lot supplied in City Block 1463 (the Commerce lot). See photo on [page 34](#).

Finally, higher densities of development make parking structures more economically feasible. Low-density developments will almost always require surface parking lots to be profitable.

Parking Space Projection

For parking calculations, 2.9 spaces/1,000 sf. retail space, 2 spaces/1,000 sf. office space, and 1.5 spaces/apartment unit are used as appropriate figures for off-street parking requirements for “Town Center” styled development. The new infill development in this area could possibly include:

14,000 sf	new retail space	41 parking spaces (New buildings on blocks 1463 and 1484)
6,252 sf	existing retail space	18 parking spaces (Jays International)
	plus	
34 units	new loft apartments	51 parking spaces (2 nd & 3 rd floor space of all three buildings)
	or	
40,860 sf	new office space	81 parking spaces (2 nd & 3 rd floor space of all three buildings)
61,112 sf	total area	110 to 140 (Potential range of required parking spaces)

Parking supply shown in drawings (see Long-Term Solutions City Block 1484):

Jay’s International Site	47 parking spaces
City Property Building	41 parking spaces
South ½ of block 1463	114 parking spaces
Subtotal	202 parking spaces
Street Parking	78 parking spaces
Total parking in immediate blocks 280 (Potential 140 car surplus for parking in these blocks)	

39. House Moving Instead of Demolitions

With the high sensitivity to building demolition in the area, the Business District and the City might consider moving homes instead of demolition. Moving homes could be an appropriate solution for preserving historic homes while clearing space for additional parking for the Business District. This could be an appropriate solution for relocating homes to the eastern end of the Commerce Bank lot, or to infill other vacant lots throughout the area.